U.S. Patent Application No. 09/766,727

REMARKS

I. Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-3, 6, 10, 11, 15-25, and 27-31 are pending in the present application, and Claims 1, 6, and 27 are the independent claims. Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 herein. No new matter has been added.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-3, 6, 10, 11, 15-25, and 27-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,143,048 to Ruben (hereinafter Ruben) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,871,140 to Florance (hereinafter Florance). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

A. Independent Claim 1, As Amended

Applicants submit that Ruben and Florance, either alone or in combination, do not describe, teach or suggest at least the feature - a leasing program module, responsive to receiving a request from one of the plurality of client computers, providing site visit agent information stored in the database to the one of the plurality of client computers based on the selected real estate property. Support for this feature added to Claim 1 by the amendment herein can be found in the published specification at paragraphs 0025, 0027, and 0052.

As the Examiner acknowledges in the Office Action, Ruben does not disclose selecting a site visit agent. Ruben is directed to managing a real estate property, as opposed to a system for enabling a lease transaction as recited in Claim 1.

The Examiner alleges that Florance teaches "a method and corresponding system for information in connection with real estate comprising the use of comparables, selecting a site visit agent, and a call center." However, the only references to a site visit in Florance are collections of data that are the result of a site inspection. (See Florance, col. 20, lines 6-10; col. 20, lines 22-23; col. 22, lines 24-25.) For example, Florance identifies "recording observed data from at least one of the site inspections and the tenant canvassing" as a method of collecting

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data. (Florance, col. 20, lines 22-23.) However, Applicants submit that Florance does not teach providing site visit agent information based on the selected real estate property.

In contrast, amended Claim 1 recites providing site visit agent information based on a selected real estate property. Florance teaches storing the information that a site inspection might gather, but does not disclose providing available site agents based on a selected real estate property to perform the site inspection. The step of providing site agents recited in amended Claim 1 is part of "enabling the lease transaction" recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1, as amended, is distinct from Florance.

B. Independent Claim 6

Independent Claim 6 recites the steps of storing information for a plurality of site visit agents and selecting a site visit agent, based on the stored information. As explained in connection with Claim 1 above, the Examiner acknowledges that Ruben does not disclose storing site visit information or selecting a site visit agent. Furthermore, Florance only discloses storing information obtained from a site visit in a database. (See Florance, col. 20, lines 6-10; col. 20, lines 22-23; col. 22, lines 24-25.) Florance does not disclose storing information about site visit agents from which a site visit agent can be selected to conduct a lease transaction. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claim 6 is distinct from the references the Examiner cites.

C. Independent Claim 27

Independent Claim 27 recites a system comprising a local database containing site visit agent information and a property management services server that can select a site visit agent from the local database. Applicants submit that neither of the references the Examiner cites disclose these elements of Claim 27.

As explained above, the Examiner has acknowledged that Ruben does not disclose information about a site visit agent. As further explained previously, Florance only teaches storing in a database information gathered from a site visit. (See Florance, col. 20, lines 6-10; col. 20, lines 22-23; col. 22, lines 24-25.) Florance does not describe a system that includes a local database of information about site visit agents or a system capable of selecting a site visit

agent based on the information in the local database. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claim 27 is patentable over the cited references.
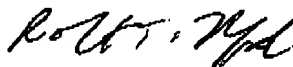
D. Dependent Claims

Each of Claims 2, 3, 10, 11, 15-25 and 28-31 depends directly or indirectly from one of the independent claims discussed above. Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claims, Applicants submit that the dependent claims are likewise patentable over at least the cited references. The dependent claims also recite additional features that further define the claimed invention over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants request separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim.

Applicants have not addressed each specific rejection of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the independent claims are allowable over the documents of record, as discussed above. Applicants have not acquiesced to any such rejections and reserve the right to address the patentability of any additional claim features in the future.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit the foregoing as a full and complete response to the Office Action mailed on July 20, 2007. Applicants submit that this Amendment and Response places the application in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action. If any issues exist that can be resolved with an Examiner's Amendment or a telephone conference, please contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at 404.572.3505.

Respectfully submitted,

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